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SURVEY OF HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES

THE SOCIETY AND THE STATE

Twenty-one new members were added to the State Historical Society during the quarter ending March 31, 1918, eight to the life and thirteen to the annual membership class. In addition, two annual members of the Society, Col. Marshall Cousins, of Eau Claire, and Oscar G. Boisseau, of Holden, Mo., transferred to the life membership group. The new life members are: John S. Allen, John N. Cadby, Williard O. Hotchkiss, Edward J. B. Schubring, Halsten J. Thorkelson, Madison; Adam A. Beck, Rev. James M. McManus, William A. Roblier, of Coloma; John H. Tweedy, Jr., of Milwaukee. The new annual members are: Prof. John G. Callan, Peter J. Connor, Prof. Charles A. Smith, Miss K. Bernice Stewart, Mrs. Magnus Swensen, of Madison; W. I. Goodland, E. W. Leach, of Racine; Azel C. Hough, of Janesville; Andrew J. Hutton, of Waukesha; John B. MacHarg, of Appleton; Charles D. Stewart, of Hartford; R. E. Van Matre, of Darlington; John P. DeMeritt, of White Plains, New York.

Many interesting additions to the Library's collection of non-current newspaper files were made during the first quarter of 1918. By far the most important is the *Illinois Intelligencer*, published at Kaskaskia and (later) Vandalia, for the years 1817-31. This paper was the first to be published in Illinois, its name in the beginning being the *Illinois Herald*. Through the courtesy of the University of Illinois Library our Society has been afforded the opportunity to make a photostatic reproduction of the file for the fourteen years included in the period noted. From the widow of the founder and publisher, Rev. I. L. Hauser, has been received the file for the first five years, 1869-74, of the Milwaukee *Index*, later and better known as the *Christian Statesman*. Other Wisconsin files acquired include the Algoma *Record*, 1910-18, and six issues (out of a total of ten published) of the *Bugle Blast*, Lake Mills' first newspaper. From Minnesota has come a complete file of the short-lived Winona *Daily News*, published from September 14 to October 7, 1916. Other files from without the state include: Lawrenceburg *Indiana Palladium*, April-December, 1825; Indianapolis *Locomotive*, 1850-52; Logansport *Journal*, April-December, 1864; Cincinnati *Brauerei-Arbeiter Zeitung*, 1910-17; Baltimore *Manufacturers Record*, 1916-18; New

York *Army and Navy Journal*, 1902-10; New York *Fatherland*, 1914-17; Tokyo *Japan Mail*, 1915-17.

Through the agency of the historical committee of the Congregational Church in Wisconsin an important collection of yearbooks, church periodicals, pamphlets, books, and other material on Congregationalism, which had been gathered at the business headquarters of the church in Madison, has been turned over to the State Historical Society. Much of the collection thus received duplicates material already owned by the Library; it will go in due time to swell the resources of some sister institution which lacks and needs it. The remainder constitutes a welcome addition to our own important collection of material in the field of Congregational church history. Thus another step is taken in the process of making the State Historical Library the repository of all available material pertaining to the history of the several religious denominations of Wisconsin. For the latest acquisition particular obligation is acknowledged to Rev. John N. Davidson, Rev. S. T. Kidder, and Rev. Henry A. Miner, Congregational ministers, all of Madison. Their active and intelligent interest in making the sources of their denominational history accessible to scholars is worthy of emulation. Who will be next to "come across" on behalf of his own denomination?

Mrs. Anna Roberts Beagle, of Menomonie, has presented the Society with three interesting family heirlooms. One is a Welsh Bible brought to America in 1817 by her father, Richard Roberts, who in later life was for many years a resident and justice of the peace at Menomonie. Another is a sword carried by her father's brother, Daniel Roberts, in the War of 1812. The third is an English hunting knife brought from England in 1817, which according to the tradition of the family has been in its possession for many generations.

From Fred M. Griswold of Lake Mills have been received six issues of the Lake Mills *Bugle Blast*, publication of which as a monthly was begun in December, 1863. Mr. Griswold states that the *Bugle Blast* was Lake Mills' first paper, and that only ten issues were published in all. It was a modest sheet, put out, apparently, in spare time by the proprietor, who also played the rôles of editor and devil as well. The annual subscription price was twenty-five cents at first, but before long the cost of materials compelled an increase to thirty cents. The file which Mr. Griswold has presented constitutes an interesting addition to the Society's collection of Wisconsin newspapers.

During the month of March, a special exhibit of Dutch war cartoons, lent for the purpose by Prof. Arnold Dresden, was made in the State Historical Museum. They accompanied the issues of the newspaper *De Nieuwe Amsterdamer*, and are the work of the famous Dutch cartoonists, P. Vanderham, Willy Sluiter, and Jan Sluyters. The cartoons measure 12½ by 19 inches in size and nearly all of them are printed in colors. They deal with such subjects as the German war horrors, war conditions in Holland, the neutrals, and peace. The most striking of the latter class is one in which the Angel of Peace is seen stooping over the world, which, porcupine-like, is completely covered with protruding bayonets. The translated inscription reads: "I do not find a spot where I can take hold of him."

The State Historical Museum, in order to complete certain of its collections, is especially anxious to secure samples of the following implements and utensils formerly in use in Wisconsin and other states: A pomace knife, mead stick, hearth brush, wooden-toothed rake, corn sheller, cheese tester, farrier's shave, sheep yoke, goose yoke, milking stool, wool comb, tape loom or heddle frame, rundlets, wooden tankard, wooden dishes, stirring stick, butter molds, milk skimmer, earthenware foot-warmer, magnifier of the kind formerly placed in front of candles or sconces, fleam, wooden pitch pipe, and a wooden prism.

Samples of early American china are also desired, pewter ware, a hand lamp, miner's lamp, tea canister, wooden sugar-box, butter bowl, mush paddle, hickory hay fork, old hand-made keys, and old-style door knocker. Gifts of such specimens will be greatly appreciated and will assist the museum in its work with university students and the public schools of the state.

In March, 1918, Magnus Swenson, chairman of the State Council of Defense, appointed a War History Commission for Wisconsin, and delegated to it the work of collecting for permanent preservation all the material that can be obtained relating to our state's share in the Great War. The plan is the outgrowth of steps taken early in the war by the National Board for Historical Service in Washington to make a complete and monumental collection of the material pertaining to America's part in this great struggle.

The commission consists of M. M. Quaife, Madison, chairman; W. W. Bartlett, Eau Claire, C. R. Fish, Madison, J. H. A. Lacher, Waukesha, W. N. Parker, Madison, A. H. Sanford, La Crosse, and Captain H. A. Whipple, Waterloo. John W. Oliver, Madison, was named director of the commission. At a meeting held in the office of the Superintendent of the State Historical Society on March 8, the commission decided to begin at once the work that had been

assigned. The State Historical Library in Madison was selected as the headquarters for the commission, and from there the work is being directed. Local war history committees have been appointed in every county of the state, charged with the specific function of collecting and preserving all the records relating to that particular county's activity in the war. By coöperating with the county councils of defense, the public libraries, the local historical societies, and the schools, it is hoped that every record and news item possessing historical value will be saved for the use of future workers in compiling a final history of Wisconsin's part in the war.

In line with the foregoing activity, a movement has been undertaken by the University of Wisconsin and the State Historical Society, working in conjunction, to develop at Madison a comprehensive war collection, which shall adequately serve the needs of future investigators. A special fund has been provided, deemed adequate to the purpose in view, and Dr. Asa C. Tilton, a trained bibliographer and historian, has been secured to serve as curator of the War Collection and direct the work of collecting. The special drive for historical materials thus put under way will be conducted in close coördination with the ordinary work of the Historical Library and the library and other departments of the University. As a result of it, there should be developed at Madison such a comprehensive war collection for the use of students and research workers as the New York Public Library and one or two others are developing in the East. As far as known, nowhere in the West, outside of Madison, is such a collection being developed.

The forty-sixth annual meeting of the Outagamie County Pioneers' Association was held at Appleton the latter part of February. A business program was held in the forenoon, a dinner at noon, and a literary and musical program in the afternoon. Addresses were given by Mayor Faville, Postmaster Keller, Judge Spencer, and others. Throughout the addresses the patriotic note was dominant.

The forty-third annual meeting of the Reedsburg Old Settlers' Association was held February 15, 1918, under unfavorable weather conditions. A picnic dinner was eaten, and a miscellaneous program of songs, addresses, and instrumental music was given. The treasurer's report showed a balance on hand of \$191. Officers elected for the ensuing year were John P. Stone, president; C. M. Kester, vice president; Elsie Root, secretary; F. M. Baker, treasurer.

On March 26, in the Kellogg Public Library, the Green Bay Historical Society held a scheduled meeting. On the program were papers by W. M. Conway of the State Highway Commission on

"Roads of Wisconsin and How They Can Be Made More Interesting"; by Mrs. W. D. Cooke on "Shantytown in 1820"; and by J. P. Schumacher on "The Site of the First Church Built in Shantytown by Father Mazzuchelli."

An attractively printed program of the Sauk County Historical Society records a noteworthy list of activities for 1917-18, the organization's thirteenth year. The annual meeting occurred October 5, 1917, the principal address being given by M. M. Quaife on "The Angel of Wisconsin." On March 1, 1918 a second meeting was held, at which papers or addresses were given on the following subjects: "The Coming of the Circuit Rider in Wisconsin," by Rev. W. R. Irish; "The First Murder Trial in Baraboo," by R. T. Warner, of Everett, Washington; "The First Permanent Settler at Baraboo," by Louise P. Kellogg; "Pioneer Occupations," by N. G. Abbott, of Eureka Springs, Arkansas. The program for the meeting appointed for April 5 consisted of the following papers: "When I 'Broke Into' Sauk County Politics," by John M. True; "Wisconsin Map by I. A. Lapham," by H. E. French; "Additional Reminiscences of Ableman—A Sequel," by Eva Alexander; and "Indians at Baraboo in Pioneer Times," by M. H. Mould.

A pamphlet describing Wisconsin's participation in the exposition held in Chicago in the summer of 1915 to commemorate the semicentennial of the emancipation of the Negro has recently been issued. Hon. S. A. Cook, Neenah, president, Hon. George P. Hambrecht, Madison, treasurer, and Samuel R. Banks, Madison, secretary, formed the personnel of the commission appointed by the Governor to represent Wisconsin. The creditable progress made by the black man along lines of industry and art was illustrated in convincing fashion by the exhibits. The report of the progress made along educational lines is no less worthy of note. A message from Governor Phillip on Wisconsin Day said: "Certainly they have done enough to merit our heartiest praise and coöperation and to inspire the hope that the problem which confronted the white man when this vast population was given freedom will be solved by the help of the leaders of the race itself."

At the time of going to press tentative arrangements have been made for a joint meeting of the State Historical Society and the Sauk County Historical Society to be held at the site of old Fort Winnebago near Portage on Labor Day, 1918. There will be a picnic dinner, but as the place is in the outskirts of Portage any who prefer to eat at the hotel may easily arrange to do so. A short historical address will be given, followed by visits to the site of the fort and the "Agency house," the latter made famous by Mrs. Kinzie in her book,

Wau Bun. Near by, also, may be seen the place of the famous Fox-Wisconsin portage, first crossed by white men, so far as our knowledge goes, by Louis Jolliet and Jacques Marquette in 1673, and the old United States military cemetery. Such a gathering should attract a large number of visitors from all the surrounding communities.

Dr. A. Gerend, of Cato, addressed the Manitowoc County Historical Society on the evening of March 8, on the subject, "The Indians of Manitowoc County." Dr. Gerend is an industrious investigator in the local field of Indian history and archeology, and has supplied some interesting material to the State Historical Library.

On February 10, 1918, the First Baptist Church of Sheboygan Falls celebrated its eightieth anniversary. Organized February 11, 1838, this church is ten years older than the Commonwealth itself. The present church building was dedicated December 18, 1850, and like the organization which it houses, is one of the oldest in Wisconsin. In the eighty years of its existence the church has had twenty pastors, ten clerks, and six treasurers.

The Catholic diocese of Green Bay was created by a breve of Pope Pius IX, March 3, 1868. The semicentennial of its birth was celebrated throughout the parishes of the diocese during the first week of March, 1918. Upon organization fifty years ago the diocese had 26 priests, 27 parishes and 41 missions, 12 schools, and a population of 40,000. Today it contains 164 parishes and 75 missions with churches; 106 parish schools with over 24,000 pupils enrolled; besides 3 colleges for men, an academy for women, 2 Indian schools, 9 hospitals, and a population of 149,000.

The Mexican War ended seventy years ago, and but few active participants in it now remain alive. One Mexican War veteran was James Law, of Madison, who died January 30, 1918. Had he lived until February 21, he would have been ninety years of age. Mr. Law was one of Madison's early stonemasons, and is said to have worked on the old Capitol building.

George B. Ferry, of Milwaukee, probably Wisconsin's most eminent architect, died January 29, 1917. Among the notable buildings designed by Mr. Ferry are the Milwaukee Public Library, and the splendid home of the State Historical Society at Madison.

A joint meeting of the Wisconsin Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters with the Wisconsin Archeological Society was held in the assembly room of the State Historical Society, April 11 and 12, 1918. Of the two dozen or more papers read, the following were

devoted particularly to Wisconsin history: "Additional Wisconsin Peace Medals," by Charles E. Brown; "The State Collection of War Posters," by Ruth O. Roberts; "The Work of the Wisconsin War History Commission," by John W. Oliver. The other papers were devoted chiefly to archeological and scientific subjects.

The Wisconsin Archeological Society held its annual meeting in the lecture room of the Milwaukee Public Museum on Monday evening, March 18, 1918. The meeting was well attended by members from Milwaukee and various other points in the state. At the business meeting the following officers were elected: Dr. Samuel A. Barrett, Milwaukee, president; Dr. E. J. W. Notz, Milwaukee, John P. Schumacher, Green Bay, A. T. Newman, Bloomer, Dr. F. E. Dayton, New London, and Charles G. Schoewe, Milwaukee, vice presidents. W. H. Vogel and William A. Phillips were elected members of the executive board, and Lee R. Whitney, treasurer. The secretary's annual report, read by Charles E. Brown, shows that the society has been active in the field of exploration and publication.

De Have Norton of the Fourth Wisconsin Infantry (later the Fourth Wisconsin Cavalry) died at his home in Hingham, Wisconsin, February 20, 1918. From Mrs. Norton the Society has received about twenty-five Civil War letters written by her late husband to his parents from 1861 to 1865. Mr. Norton served from June, 1861, until the close of the war. He was an intelligent and entertaining correspondent and it is a matter for regret that so few of his letters have been preserved. The following citations from two of his letters written, the one at Camp Utley, Racine, on the eve of departure for the front in July, 1861, the other from Montgomery, Alabama, in May, 1865, afford a pleasing picture of the spirit which animated our Civil War soldiers. "I shall not see you again so good by Father & Mother. God be with you till I see you again. I think the cause which I go to defend is worth the sacrifice which I make, for I do make a great sacrifice. I leave home and all I love to stake my life for my Country. I go willingly, as for you, don't fear for me I shall do well enough. If I never return you will know that I died in the cause of Liberty & truth"

And four years later: "I am safe and sound as ever. We have had a long and tedious march. * * * There was not a shot exchanged with the enemy. The rebels are all at home. the towns are full of them. we mix all together the best of friends. it looks nice to see the gray uniform and blue uniform together. Well father after four long years of blood and terror the war is over. You can imagine the feelings of the soldiers on the subject."

THE DINSDALE PAPERS

Rev. Matthew Dinsdale was born at Askrigg, Yorkshire, England, July 14, 1815, and received his education at a boy's school in his native valley Wensleydale. This school was on a foundation existing from the time of Queen Elizabeth, and one of its first trustees was Ivor Dinsdale, an ancestor of Matthew. The latter came to the United States in 1844 on the packet *St. George*, 1200 tons, one of the finest transatlantic steamers of its time. After a three months' journey he arrived at Kenosha (then Southport), Wisconsin, on the eighth of October, and was soon among friends who had preceded him and settled at English Prairie just across the Wisconsin line in McHenry County, Illinois. A month later Mr. Dinsdale was received into the quarterly conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, having brought credentials from the Wesleyan Conference in England. The next year he joined the Rock River Conference and was assigned to Potosi circuit in the lead-mining district of southwestern Wisconsin. The succeeding year Mr. Dinsdale was appointed to the Lake Winnebago circuit, then a mission district including preaching stations among the Brothertown Indians, at Oshkosh, and other new settlements along the lake shore. He virtually lived in the saddle, going from cabin to cabin, and gathering the settlers together for a Sunday service. Often he slept by the roadside or in the woods. His health was impaired by the severe strain of his circuit-riding days, and in 1849 he joined a group of friends who visited the gold regions of California. After over two years in this pioneer work, Mr. Dinsdale returned to England, and there in April, 1853 he married Mary Anne Mann, of York. Returning to America with his young English bride, he applied once more for admission to the Methodist Church, and in 1858 entered the West Wisconsin Conference. Thereafter for nineteen years he served in many pastorates in the southwestern part of the state. In 1872 and 1873 he was preacher in charge at Madison. Four years later he retired from the active ministry, and spent his declining years at Linden, Iowa County, where, on April 15, 1898, he passed away.

His only surviving daughter, Mrs. Magnus Swenson, of Madison, has recently presented to the Historical Society many of her father's papers. Among them are three diaries of considerable historical value. The first describes the voyage from England to America, the early days in this country, the work and events of pioneer life, "hewing bees," house-raising, rail-splittings, hog-killings, and the like, interspersed with descriptions of the weather, the climate, and the land.

The second, or California diary, is perhaps the most interesting of the number. Leaving Linden, Wisconsin, November 3, 1849, the

traveler went via Milwaukee, Buffalo, and Albany to New York City whence he sailed December 1 for Panama. Thereafter we have a daily account until the landing, January 21, 1850, at the new city of San Francisco, which he thus characterizes: "San Francisco I think will become a great place. Its location is good convenient and pleasant and more still is healthy." Thence the young minister sought the mining camps, digging during the week and preaching on Sunday. Here for example is a typical entry: "Sunday 19 Jan'y 1851. A Captⁿ (Sea) told me *how* he came to be in the mines. Lost his vessel and came to San Francisco to purchase another. There he took the *fever* and came to dig: Has made but little, Spoke of the misery caused to families by the gold discovery. His case that of thousands. Leave all to mine and then make nothing." Mr. Dinsdale's case was not of this character. The fifth of June, 1853, the assay of his gold at the Philadelphia mint amounted to \$4,094.13.

The third journal was written when in service as agent of the Christian Commission in the spring of 1865 in the vicinity of Nashville. The writer visited the camps and hospitals, distributed papers and Bibles, read and prayed with the soldiers, and in some cases took their dying messages.

In addition to the diaries, the papers include many letters of historical interest. All those written home to England from the time the young emigrant arrived at New York until he left there five years later for California have fortunately been preserved. The writer had a good command of language and a gift for clear and lucid expression, and he portrays his first experiences in the New World with delightful vigor and freshness. He relates his first days in America, the prices of commodities and the modes and discomforts of traveling. He had an especial fondness for natural scenery, and his descriptions even of so hackneyed a subject as Niagara Falls, do not pall upon the reader. More important are the accounts he gives of conditions in our Territory during its formative years—at first in the southeast, then in the more settled southwestern portion he pictures the life of the frontier with truth and vigor. Most valuable of all, perhaps, is the description he gives of the Lake Winnebago region when the rapid ingress of new settlers was at its height, and the Indians were retreating before the American advance. Among the experiences he details were those of a visit to a Menominee Indian payment on the shores of Lake Poygan, where his clear observation of conditions among the retiring race are of peculiar value to the historian of the tribesmen. In the letters of advice which he

gave to relatives who intended to emigrate, nothing was forgotten, and their detailed narration presents a full picture of the difficulties and necessities of the early immigrants from Great Britain, and the courage required to undertake the long and oft-times dangerous voyage.

A series of later letters describes the writer's experience in the work of the Christian Commission during the Civil War.

Taken as a whole the Dinsdale Papers are a valuable addition to the collections of our Society, illustrating as they so well do the experiences of an intelligent, educated immigrant during the formative period of territorial days. It is to be hoped that many more such groups of papers, now preserved in private hands, will ultimately find their way into our custody where they will be of value to the history of this state.

THE LADD PAPERS

Dr. Otto L. Schmidt, of Chicago, a life member of the Society, has presented an important collection of letters and documents received by Dr. Azel Ladd while serving in 1851 and 1852 as state superintendent of public instruction. For the most part they consist of appeals to the state officer to interpret the school law for local communities, and the resolving of disputes and difficulties between the teachers and the officials. Many of the letters are requests for information with regard to the allotments of school money, and a few have to do with the lease or sale of school lands. A considerable number carry the endorsement "Library returns." These contain reports of the number of books in the school libraries under the law requiring one-tenth of the state allotments to be expended for books. Incidentally from these letters much may be learned of the early educational history of our state—the short terms of the schools, the qualifications and salaries of the teachers, the number and conduct of the pupils. From some of these letters may be seen the educational conditions among our foreign immigrants. Complaints are frequent of teachers that cannot write or speak English. One letter asks the question, later so pertinent in our educational politics, whether the reading of the Bible constitutes a breach of Section 3, Article 10 of the Wisconsin Constitution. Another writer, defending the character of his daughter, a school teacher at Moundville, sends the Superintendent a specimen of her efforts in verse, which have been much admired. There are nearly a thousand papers in the collection, which constitute an important guide to the early history of education in Wisconsin. Practically all of the letters belong to the years 1851 and 1852.